WAR DEPARTMENT

INFANTRY FIELD MANUAL

ANTITANK COMPANY, RIFLE REGIMENT May 23, 1941

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ANTITANK COMPANY, RIFLE REGIMENT

Prepared under direction of the Chief of Infantry



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INFANTRY FIELD MANUAL

ANTITANK COMPANY, RIFLE REGIMENT

SECTION I

DOCTRINE

- \blacksquare 1 General Methods of Antitank Action.—a The action of antitank units must be included with the action of other combat elements, both in attack and in defense. In approach march and attack, the movements and positions of antitank units must be coordinated to insure protection of the attacking troops and their reserves against counterattack. In defense they cover the main line of resistance and favorable avenues for tank approach, or are grouped with infantry reserves and armored units for the support of counterattacks. The employment of antitank units as independent defensive elements and their distribution with a view to covering every possible avenue of tank approach or to affording immediate protection to all echelons of the forces lead to uncoordinated action and a dispersion of the means of antitank defense with consequent loss of effectiveness. The employment of antitank units must be included in the general plan of action of the entire force.
- b. Within the limitations fixed by the location and mission of the troops, the terrain dictates the distribution of antitank gun units.
- c. The defense of a position against an enemy force, including armored units, comprises two main elements:
- (1) Tactical localities organized in depth and garrisoned for the defense of the main line of resistance and including the antitank units (reinforced when necessary) of the front line regiments and passive antitank means such as mines and obstacles.
- (2) Reserves of large units held out for counterattack and including foot infantry, armored units, and antitank units.
- d. Where the organized localities, including active and passive antitank means, do not succeed in stopping the attack, they disrupt, retard, and canalize the attacking armored units

and thus create conditions favorable for counterattack by the intact defensive reserves. The reserve antitank units occupy positions in such manner as to afford protection against hostile tanks, and to disrupt further and canalize the tanks into zones where they may be effectively dealt with by the counterattacking forces and other planned active and passive measures. The location of antitank mines and obstacles must be known to counterattack forces, especially friendly mechanized elements. Whenever practicable the location of mine fields and obstacles should be coordinated in advance with counterattack plans.

- 2. Training.—a. Members of the antitank company are trained as individual soldiers and as operators of crew-operated weapons in accordance with FM 7-5. All members of the company are trained to operate motor vehicles and the automatic rifle against air or ground emergency targets.
- b. Antitank units are trained with tank units, both as friendly and hostile forces. They are trained to recognize the strong and the vulnerable features of tanks, their distinguishing characteristics, and combat methods. Commanders impress on their men that the tank crew's limited field of vision increases the value of cover and concealment: that flight before armored vehicles invites certain destruction; and that a tenacious spirit and accurate delivery of fire give gun crews every chance of success. They are taught that premature opening of fire may disclose the gun positions and result in neutralization before the gun crew can accomplish its mission, and that the fight between them and the armored foe lasts only a few minutes and will be decided principally by their skill and moral stamina. They are trained to estimate the practicability of terrain for tank movement and the relative effectiveness of antitank obstacles.
- c. Training in driving over varied ground is conducted to teach chauffeurs to estimate the clearance of the vehicle and piece and the degree of angular turn, and to facilitate hasty occupation of positions and rapid displacements. Care must be emphasized in operating over rough terrain to preclude injury to the vehicle and piece.
- d. When moving in the combat area the prime movers (or weapon carriers) follow their leader with 50 yards to 100 yards

distance. If the vehicle ahead halts, others halt, keeping their distances unless signalled to close up. As vehicles halt they draw off the road or trail and stop under a tree, against a bush, or behind any nearby cover. If possible they stop in a shadow. If the leader directs or signals "take cover," the trucks endeavor to get behind walls, buildings, banks, or into depressions which give better cover from fire and view. A few branches are habitually carried to break the outline of the vehicles and guns if they are forced to halt in the open. Guns and vehicles are parked or concealed so that they may readily resume the march.

- e. Over rough ground or hard going the men dismount and follow their vehicles, helping if necessary. One man leads to pick a route. At night he carries a dimmed light for the driver to follow
- f. Covered routes are sought. Edges of woods, scattered buildings, or trees contribute to concealment. Open crests are avoided. When forced to cross a crest, a place is sought where the outline is broken by trees, houses, etc.
- g. In unfamiliar terrain the leader should proceed (with a connecting file and on foot, if necessary) to select a route.
- h. When moving to positions not fully protected by other troops, vehicles advance by bounds, each bound being reconnoitered by a single vehicle or man on foot or motorcycle before the others are signalled forward.
- 3. COMBAT INFORMATION AND ORDERS.—Each antitank unit commander passes on promptly to his subordinates the following:
- a. Enemy information.—Emphasize the latest identification and reports concerning the movements of tanks and other motorized forces.
- b. Information of our own and supporting troops.—Location, identification, and proposed employment of friendly troops, especially of mechanized and other motorized forces. Missions and locations of nearby antitank weapons, adjacent and supporting units. Location of mines, natural and artificial obstacles.
- c. Mission of unit.—Indicate the troops, installation or terrain feature to be protected. Assign sectors when applicable.

- d. Miscellaneous.—Arrangements for local security, ammunition and ration supply, alternate positions, supplementary positions, prime mover positions, warning service, position in readiness, prearranged signals and communications.
 - e. Location of-
 - (1) Aid stations.
 - (2) Ammunition distributing point.
 - (3) Command post.
- 4. Local Security and Warning Service.—a. Antitank unit commanders make provisions for the local security of their units and prearrange an effective warning system. On route march and approach, in bivouac, in assembly areas, and in combat constant vigilance and sure means of communication and warning are maintained to preclude surprise and to insure timely and effective operation of the guns. Antitank units coordinate with nearby friendly troops in regard to local security, communications, and warning service. Relay posts are required frequently in the transmission of signals. Air and motor reconnaissance units usually give the first warning of the presence of hostile tanks in the vicinity of the unit. To give warning of the approach or presence of hostile aircraft, mechanized or ground attack, three long blasts of whistle or vehicular horn repeated several times, or three equally spaced shots with rifle or pistol, or three short bursts of fire from machine gun are prescribed. In daylight the person giving the signal indicates the direction of the impending danger. At night or during daylight if necessary the alarm signal will be supplemented by voice to indicate the direction of the danger.
- b. In moving situations vigorous and continuous reconnaissance are conducted. Radio and prearranged signals are employed to maintain communications and to give timely warning.
- c. An antitank unit in a position in readiness establishes observation and warning posts throughout its area of responsibility at such distances as to insure the timely arrival of gun units at their firing positions. There must be sure communications between the unit and its observation and warning posts. Sound-powered telephones or voice radio may be used where antitank elements are not too widely separated.
 - d. In defensive situations where antitank observation and

warning posts are connected with a signal communications system, their warning calls are given priority.

SECTION II

CHARACTERISTICS OF 37-MM GUN AND GUN POSITIONS

- 5. Technical Characteristics.—The 37-mm gun is the principal weapon of the regimental antitank company. Its more important characteristics are—
- a. High velocity and flat trajectory. Effective penetration up to 1,000 yards against light and medium tanks and against concrete emplacements 2 feet thick. Accuracy of fire against moving targets falls off greatly beyond 1,000 yards.
- b. A practicable rate of fire of approximately 10 rounds per minute. Rate of fire is influenced more by observation of effect than by the mechanical properties of the piece.
- c. Relatively wide traverse (60°) in comparison with cannon designed for other missions.
 - d. High mobility both on roads and cross country.
- e. Limited capacity for movement by hand, with slopeclimbing ability of about 30° on firm soil.
 - f. Limitation to direct fire methods from open positions.
- g. Great vulnerability in movement in the zone of infantry fire and considerable vulnerability in firing position.
- 6. TACTICAL LIMITATIONS.—a. The foregoing characteristics of the piece limit its fire to short periods and make necessary provision for alternate positions.
- b. Long range fire against individual targets may subject gun positions to premature disclosure. However, such action may be very effective in covering defiles and other points of obligatory passage.
- c. Dependence of antitank guns on the prime mover for movement in displacements and the vulnerability of the prime mover in exposed movement frequently require the guns to await the capture of a terrain mask before commencing a displacement. Wherever practicable, such delays in displacement are avoided by the use of covered routes even where considerable detours are required.
- 7. Position.—The antitank gun and prime mover occupy positions in action or preparation for action as follows:

- a. Fire positions are occupied by the gun in action to cover an assigned sector of fire or a potential avenue of approach. Firing positions are primary, alternate, or supplementary.
- (1) Primary position is the firing position offering the best conditions for the accomplishment of the gun's mission.
- (2) Alternate position is a firing position from which the same fire missions can be executed as from the primary position.
- (3) Supplementary position is a firing position from which the gun can accomplish secondary fire missions other than those to be accomplished from primary or alternate positions.
- b. A cover position close to the firing position (within 100 yards) may be selected to provide cover and concealment for the gun and crew. In open terrain artificial cover and concealment are provided. When the observer signals an approaching target the gun is moved rapidly to the firing position. A cover position is only resorted to when cover cannot be found or provided at the firing position.
- c. Uncoupling position is the point at which the gun is uncoupled and moved by hand to the firing or cover position. It should be under cover and as near as possible to the firing position.
- d. Truck assembly area is a location under cover occupied by prime movers of an antitank gun unit when the pieces are in firing or cover positions. In moving situations it should be close enough to the firing position to permit communication by arm and hand signals and reduce the manhandling of ammunition to a minimum.
- e. Alternate positions are subject to the same requirements as primary positions and cover the same fire sector. They must be accessible from the primary position by manhandling guns under cover from enemy observation. They must be located far enough (at least 50 yards) from the primary position to avoid being included in the radius of effect of fires directed on the primary position.
- f. Positions in readiness add flexibility to antimechanized weapon defense and are used when available antitank means are inadequate to occupy positions covering an extended area or several avenues of approach. Gun units are concealed in a centrally located area, alert to move quickly to meet the hostile attack. Everything possible to insure timely employment of the guns is accomplished in advance, to include selec-

tion of positions and routes thereto. Units in a position in readiness keep pieces coupled, motors warmed, and in urgent situations, crews entrucked.

- g. In selecting a firing position, the gunner must be able to see and the gun must be able to fire into the area or sector assigned.
- (1) In covering a road, the gun should be sited to fire on a portion where movement is restricted by ditches, banks, heavy woods, or similar obstructions. The gun is located and concealed so that hostile patrols operating along the road will not find it and so that hostile interdiction fire on a road will not normally include the gun position.
- (2) In attack, positions on high ground with wide fields of fire and view are sought. Trucks are kept close at hand. Cover and concealment may have to be sacrificed to provide the best field of fire and ability to move.
- (3) In defense, maximum concealment and positions covering definite avenues of approach are sought. Trucks may be sent well to the rear if necessary for effective cover. An emplacement for the gun should be prepared if it can be concealed, and slit trenches for the crew should be dug in the immediate vicinity.

SECTION III

ANTITANK GUN SQUAD

- 8. Reference.—For mechanical training, gun drill, and technique of fire see FM 23-70. For basic training of individual soldier see FM 7-5. For training with motor transportation see FM 25-10.
- 9. Composition.—The 37-mm antitank gun squad comprises a corporal, gunner (No. 1), assistant gunner (No. 2), chauffeur, and one or more ammunition carriers.
- 10. EQUIPMENT AND TRANSPORTATION.—The equipment of the squad comprises one 37-mm antitank gun, with accessories necessary to keep it in action, and one prime mover, a truck which tows the gun and carries the crew. accessories, and ammunition.
- 11. Duties.—All members of the squad are trained to assume the duties of any other member of the squad. For detailed duties see FM 23-70.

- 12. MOVEMENT.—a. Movements from cover to firing positions or from primary positions to alternate positions are usually executed by hand. Movement from primary to supplementary positions may be executed coupled or by hand, depending on the distance separating the positions. Movements from positions in readiness to firing positions are usually executed coupled.
- b. On the march and in cross-country movement, the prime mover is used to tow the gun and to carry the crew, ammunition, and accessories wherever the situation permits. On extremely difficult terrain the men dismount, assisting the vehicles when necessary. The squad leader often precedes his vehicle on foot to select the route and avoid obstructions.
 - 13. Occupation of Firing Position.—a. Reconnaissance prior to the occupation of the position is conducted as inconspicuously as possible.
 - b. The squad leader designates the exact location of the firing position in the approximate area assigned by the section leader. He locates the cover position and directs the movement of the piece thereto from the uncoupling position. He supervises the preparation of the gun emplacement and shelter for the crew and takes all practicable measures for the concealment of the gun emplacement and posts of the crew, and clearance of the field of fire. Sufficient ammunition for prospective fires is laid down at the emplacement. When action is impending it may be advisable to set up the gun in the first reasonable position that is found so that the gun can fire if tanks appear before the reconnaissance for the final position is completed (see fig. 1).
 - c. The position is prepared so that the piece can cover the entire assigned primary sector by its maximum limit of traverse. If natural obstacles do not exist, the immediate approaches to the position are blocked by artificial obstacles where practicable. Ammunition at the emplacement is so located as to avoid interference with the service and movement of the piece.
 - d. Measures for concealment are of extreme importance in the preparation of a position from which fire is not to be opened immediately. The gun is covered with the camouflage net or natural camouflage in both firing and cover positions.

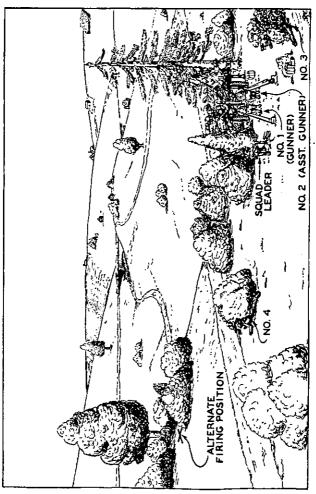


FIGURE 1.—Gun squad in firing position.

Measures are taken to avoid or minimize the effects of muzzle blast and flash.

- e. Whenever effective concealment in the firing position is impracticable, the squad initially occupies a cover position while the squad leader observes and prepares the firing data. The crew moves the gun into the firing position and prepares for action on the squad leader's order.
- f. In the prolonged occupation of a position, reliefs of observers are established. Observation is so organized as to cover the fields of view to the front and to the flanks and rear of the position.
- 14. Fire Control.—a. Unless the section leader has reserved to himself the opening of fire, the squad leader exercises fire control in accordance with his general instructions. He opens fire on targets appearing in the squad primary sector of fire when they arrive within the range limits fixed by the section leader. Similarly he opens fire on targets appearing in secondary sectors under conditions fixed by the section leader. He makes certain of the identification of the target as an enemy vehicle.
- b. Where emplacements of the section guns are located close enough to permit section control, the section leader may reserve the opening of fire and also the shifting of fire to other sectors.
- c. After the squad leader's order to open fire, the gunner selects successive targets in the assigned fire sector on his own initiative.
- d. Fire once opened is not interrupted during the progress of a tank attack. Short, quick changes of position may be necessary to facilitate firing or to meet a flank attack.
- e. Alternate positions are occupied when enemy action makes fire from the primary position impracticable. In squad training, the movement of the piece to the uncoupling position, the uncoupling of the piece and movement into firing and cover positions, change of direction of fire, movement into alternate positions, and coupling of the piece are intensively practiced so as to reduce the time required for these operations.
- f. The squad leader must at all times be informed as to the ammunition supply and the possibilities of replenishment. He signals for replenishment in time to avoid depletion of the supply at the gun.

- 15. DISPLACEMENT.—a. In attack the squad executes displacements to uncoupling positions designated by the section leader. Movement over open ground is executed coupled at as rapid a rate as the nature of the ground permits. Advantage is taken of available cover to mask the movement. The squad leader executes reconnaissance of the firing positions and routes leading thereto, and directs the movement of the piece from the uncoupling position to cover position and the preparation of the firing position.
- b. Displacements in retrograde movements are effected in accordance with the methods indicated for the attack.

SECTION IV

RIFLE SQUAD

- 16. References.—For basic training of a soldier and the rifle squad see FM 7-5. For technique of fire, rifle and automatic rifle squad, see FM 23-5 and FM 23-15.
- 17. Composition.—a. The squad comprises a sergeant (squad leader), a corporal (second in command), a chauffeur, automatic riflemen, assistant automatic riflemen, and several riflemen.
- b. Its organization and equipment permit the formation of two automatic rifle groups, each consisting of a noncommissioned officer, automatic rifleman, assistant automatic rifleman, and riflemen for attachment to antitank gun sections as required. (For further details see app. I.)
- 18. EQUIPMENT AND TRANSPORTATION.—Individual armament includes automatic rifles and rifles. A truck is assigned for the transportation of the squad. Intrenching tools, distributed in the ratio of 5 shovels, 3 pick mattocks, 1 axe, and 1 wire cutter to every 10 men, are carried in the squad transportation.
- 19. Mission.—a. The principal mission of the squad is the protection of the guns in position against the attack of foot or motorized elements, and in protected postion areas the extension of the warning service.
- b. In detached missions of the antitank platoon or section, the squad or an automatic rifle group may form part of a security detachment covering the movement.

- 20. EMPLOYMENT.—a. The squad is distributed to sections by automatic rifle groups when sections are assigned detached missions.
- b. In the defense of antitank gun positions, the squad is employed as a unit under the direction of the platoon leader or distributed by group to the sections. Unit employment is indicated where the situation favors covering the platoon front by cross fires of the automatic rifles. Where visibility is restricted or the platoon covers a wide front, automatic rifle group distribution to sections is usually necessary.
- c. Where practicable the rifle squad precedes the gun units in the occupation of a position. In the echeloned displacement of the platoon in attack, the squad (under platoon control) usually displaces by groups.
- d. The platoon leader coordinates the squad dispositions for the protection of a position with nearby troops. When sections of the position are adequately protected by other troops, the squad is employed to extend the warning service. An exposed flank may require the employment of the entire squad for flank protection.
- e. The rifle squad leader insures that the members of the squad understand the squad mission (see par. 3).
- f. Available riflemen assist the antitank gunners in the preparation of firing positions, and where necessary in the movement by hand of ammunition for the piece.

SECTION V

ANTITANK GUN SECTION

- 21. Composition.—The 37-mm antitank gun section comprises a sergeant (section leader), a chauffeur, and two antitank gun squads.
- 22. EQUIPMENT AND TRANSPORTATION.—a. The section includes two 37-mm antitank guns and three prime movers. The section leader is armed with a pistol and is equipped with field glasses. The chauffeur is armed with a rifle and equipped with compass. Intrenching tools are distributed and carried as indicated for the squad.
- b. Two prime movers draw the guns and transport the gun squads, accessories, and ammunition. The third (section truck) carries the section leader, chauffeur, and ammunition,

and is a reserve prime mover. When the gun squads are not operating on separate missions, ammunition carriers may be transported on the section truck available to handle ammunition. An automatic rifle is provided with each section group of trucks for local security and antiaircraft protection.

- 23. Duties.—a. Section leader.—The section leader—
- (1) In accordance with instructions from the platoon leader or other higher commander, assigns position areas or approximate locations for the guns, and prescribes the conditions governing the opening of fire.
- (2) Assigns positions for each squad and designates a truck assembly area for the section.
- (3) Exercises supervision over the firing and assigns primary and secondary sectors of fire for each gun.
- (4) Checks the preparation of the firing and cover positions and also the security and camouflage provisions at the gun and truck assembly area.
- (5) Assigns a mission and a position or position area to attached rifle units.
- (6) Insures that the squad leaders understand their missions and the mission of the section (see par. 3).
- b. Chauffeur.—(1) The driver of the section leader's truck operates that vehicle in conformity with instructions of the section leader. Unless otherwise indicated he has supervision over all vehicles of the section.
- (2) Carefully conceals or camouflages his vehicles and supervises the concealment and camouflage of the squad prime movers in the limber position.
- (3) Details one squad chauffeur to operate an automatic rifle against ground or air targets and the other squad chauffeur to observe for hostile airplanes and ground patrols. He himself observes for signals or messages from the section leader and the gun positions.
- (4) Checks the fuel supply and operating condition of all vehicles in the limber position.
- 24. Fire Mission.—a. The section (in platoon) ordinarily receives its combat mission to cover a defined sector of fire. The platoon leader's order usually fixes the range limits for opening fire.
- b. The distribution of fire missions to the squads depends upon the width of the assigned section sector. Wherever

practicable each squad covers the section sector in order to insure that the neutralization of one piece will not leave the entire sector without defense.

- c. A section may be detached to defend a designated area, to cover an avenue of hostile approach, or to support a rifle unit charged with a mission which requires the destruction of buildings, concrete emplacements, stone walls, and similar defensive works.
- 25. ROUTE MARCH.—a. The movement of the section (in platoon) is conducted in accordance with the provisions of FM 25-10.
- b. In the movement of the regiment, a section is frequently attached to a security element (advance guard, flank guard, etc.) or to a battalion, and executes the missions directed by the commander of the unit to which attached. During short halts or march bivouacs, antitank guns are uncoupled and placed in appropriate positions for immediate employment. Similarly in bivouac single sections are frequently posted to cover an approach or are attached to an outpost unit.
- 26. REGIMENTAL APPROACH MARCH.—During the approach march the section may be employed as an echelon of an antitank platoon charged with the flank protection of the regiment. A section engaged in this mission ordinarily is reinforced by a rifle element. The mission of the section may be to cover an avenue of hostile approach for a prescribed period or until the regiment or a specified element thereof has passed. Depending on the situation, the section may execute this mission by improvising a road block, temporarily installing antitank mines, or by occupying a firing position or position in readiness.
- 27. Reconnaissance and Occupation of Firing Position.—a. In preparation for combat, the platoon leader or other higher commander assigns the section a position or position in readiness to which the section leader moves his gun squads. At the same time or as soon thereafter as practicable, he is assigned a firing position area and a sector of fire. Accompanied by the squad leaders, the section leader reconnoiters the designated position area, points out the fire sectors, and fixes the approximate gun emplacements. If there is danger of immediate attack the guns are brought forward and set

up in temporary, hastily selected positions so that they can defend themselves and cover the area if hostile tanks appear before reconnaissance is complete. He locates the section observation post and the truck assembly area, and directs the movement of the squads into their positions and the prime movers into the truck assembly area. He supervises the preparation of the gun positions. He selects alternate and supplementary positions in accordance with the mission and the instructions of the platoon leader or other higher commander (see fig. 2).

- b. The section is usually disposed with the squad fire positions echeloned in depth so as to be capable of covering a deep field of fire toward a flank.
- c. Where a group of the rifle squad has been attached to the section, the section leader assigns positions to the automatic rifle and the riflemen for the close protection of the antitank guns in accordance with the general methods prescribed in FM 7-5. The position will often be located between the guns. An exposed flank may however call for the occupation of a flank position by part or all of the group. When available and required, a rifleman may be detailed as section observer and messenger.
- 28. Fire Direction and Control.—The section leader directs the fire of his guns by the assignment of fire sectors and by fixing the limiting range for opening fire. Exceptionally, the section leader may reserve the opening of fire on his order. He checks the fire-control measures of squad leaders, supervises the ammunition supply, and directs the trucks to the proper ammunition distributing point for replenishment when required.
- 29. DISPLACEMENT.—a. The section leader regulates displacements in support of an attacking unit in accordance with the mission or the instructions of the platoon leader. He executes a timely reconnaissance of new firing and truck assembly areas. He frequently displaces the section by squad echelons and in such a way as to maintain a distribution in depth for flank defense. This may require the rear squad to hold its position until the situation calls for the initiation of another bound of section displacement; especially will this be the case if the section is operating on an exposed flank.

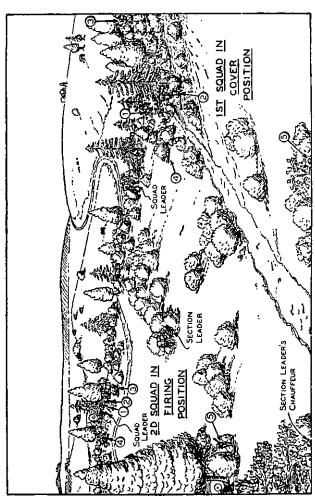


FIGURE 2.—Gun section, 1st squad in cover position, 2d squad in firing position.

- b. Displacement may be effected on order of the platoon leader or on the section leader's initiative. Before initiating a displacement, the latter is informed as to the position area to be occupied and the sector to be covered in his new position. He reconnoiters the terrain of the displacement and prearranges the method of movement to the new positions with his squad leaders. He moves forward to the new position area. observes the location of and establishes liaison with advanced friendly troops, and selects an observation post and approximate gun positions from which the assigned sector and the terrain toward the flanks can be observed and covered by fire. He selects a position where the guns can be uncoupled under cover and from which movement by hand to cover positions in close proximity to the firing positions can be carried out. He directs the movement of the squads by prearranged signals or by messenger. Where the intervening terrain is visible or known, the squad or squads may be directed to proceed forward to a specified place or along a specified route where further instructions as to the movement forward or occupation of positions will be given.
- c. Attached riflemen usually precede the section to new positions and are placed in position prior to the arrival of the guns.

SECTION VI

ANTITANK GUN PLATOON

- 30. Composition.—The antitank gun platoon comprises a command group, two antitank gun sections, and a rifle squad. Communications, reconnaissance, and pioneer elements are usually attached for the execution of detached or isolated missions.
- 31. COMMAND GROUP.—a. Personnel, equipment, and transportation.—See appendix I.
- b. Duties.—(1) Platoon leader.—Commands the two sections, the platoon transport (including section transport when assembled), the command group, the rifle squad, and such reconnaissance, pioneer, and communications elements as may be attached. He may place the transport corporal in direct charge of all the vehicles in the truck assembly area and will usually do so in defensive situations. He insures that

the platoon mission is thoroughly understood within the platoon (see par. 3).

- (2) Platoon sergeant.—Assists and replaces the platoon leader in the execution of his duties; supervises the operation of the command post and ammunition supply; brings up the rear of the platoon on the march and maintains contact with all elements of the platoon; performs the administrative duties of first sergeant when the platoon is detached.
- (3) Agent corporal.—Employed as liaison agent to the unit supported and keeps the platoon leader informed of the situation at all times.
- (4) Transport corporal.—(a) Conducts the platoon vehicles when assembled (ammunition and cargo trucks, command car).
- (b) Directs the movement of the vehicles to the truck assembly area when guns are uncoupled.
- (c) Supervises the disposition of vehicles and the provisions for local security positions when platoon vehicles are assembled.
- (d) Designates a chauffeur to observe for signals and to receive messages from the platoon leader.
- (e) Checks on fuel requirements and mechanical condition of the platoon vehicles.
- (f) Performs duties of supply sergeant when the platoon is detached.
- (5) Instrument corporal.—Assists the platoon leader in conducting reconnaissance and in establishing an observation post.
- (6) One chauffeur.—Operates the command car as directed by the platoon leader.
- (7) Two messengers.—Trained also as observers and to operate the sound-powered telephones and the portable voice radio sets. One usually accompanies the platoon leader, the other assists the instrument corporal at the observation post.
- 32. DISTRIBUTION OF PERSONNEL FOR MOVEMENT.—The platoon leader, the agent corporal (when not detached), the instrument corporal, one messenger (with voice radio set), and the chauffeur are usually transported in the command car. The platoon sergeant, the transport corporal, and the remaining messenger of platoon headquarters ride on other platoon vehicles as directed by the platoon leader.

- 33. REGIMENTAL APPROACH MARCH.—a. The platoon usually operates as a unit under the immediate direction of the platoon leader. It may be assigned to a specific mission of flank protection of the regiment or to support a designated rifle echelon or unit.
- b. In assigning a mission of flank protection, the regimental development order usually indicates the approaches which must be defended so far as this can be foreseen. The initial order or subsequent instructions of the company commander indicate the period of release of antitank defense of each designated approach or area. The order may also attach rifle, reconnaissance, and communication elements to the platoon.
- c. Upon receipt of instructions assigning the platoon a flank protection mission, the platoon leader usually prescribes a place where the platoon will remain under cover while he conducts a reconnaissance accompanied by the rifle squad and appropriate personnel. Movement is conducted in accordance with the fundamentals of security and reconnaissance. Based on his reconnaissance, the platoon leader selects a single position or several alternate positions on which the antitank defense will be made. In the latter case, he locates a position in readiness for the platoon and routes leading to the several selected firing positions. He establishes observation posts from which the hostile approach can be discovered in time to permit the occupation of firing positions for antitank action.
- d. The second in command conducts the platoon to the designated place of cover, making such provisions for security as the situation and the means available permit.
- e. After the reconnaissance the platoon leader rejoins his platoon and conducts it as promptly as possible to the uncoupling position or position in readiness. He establishes some means of communication from his command post to the observation post(s). He assigns position areas and sectors of fire to the sections and takes the necessary measures for the close defense of the platoon. When sufficient means are available security groups are established for the flank protection of the position. He gives the transport corporal the necessary instructions for the dispositions of personnel and vehicles in the truck assembly area. He communicates his dispositions to the company commander at the earliest practicable moment.

- f. As the regiment continues its advance the platoon leader initiates reconnaissance for prospective position areas. Where practicable one section may be withheld from occupation of a firing position and held in readiness for movement to the next area to be occupied.
- 34. Support of Attacking Echelon.—a. The platoon ordinarily receives its orders in the regimental assembly area. It protects the occupation of the assembly position and the advance therefrom. Where a platoon is assigned the mission of protecting a rifle echelon or unit, it usually follows the advance of the echelon or unit in a state of readiness for the action required by the situation. Movement is made by bounds to successive cover positions, which may be occupied with pieces limbered, and from which firing positions can be readily occupied. Position areas and sectors of fire are assigned to sections. Provision for observation and local security are continuous. Flank protection may require an echeloned advance from successive firing positions. Sections usually displace by squad echelons. The platoon follows the unit to be protected as closely as available cover will permit. It also protects the troops from being rolled up by tank attack from the flank. Echeloned advance is frequently necessary.
- b. Based on the regimental order and the instructions of the company commander, the platoon leader issues his orders for the protection of the troops in the assembly area and in the attack. He assigns initial position areas and sectors of fire to his sections and prescribes the method of displacement. The terrain and situation may permit him to assign successive position areas to his sections to protect the advancing rifle units or echelon. Difficult terrain or a vague situation may require that he assign a zone of action to each section, in which case the section leaders must execute vigorous and continuous reconnaissance of position areas to insure that the guns execute timely and effective displacements. The platoon leader distributes the rifle squad to the sections or assigns it definite security missions.
- c. The situation of the attacking echelon, the terrain of the displacement, and the intensity of the hostile fire thereon influence the initiation of a displacement. As a general rule the attacking echelon should have gained a position in advance of a terrain feature which can be utilized as cover for

the antitank guns. Where the terrain of the displacement is exposed to intense flat trajectory fire it may be necessary to await the capture of a terrain feature masking the movement. Level terrain which does not prevent motor movement at high speed may permit displacement to a covered position in spite of intense hostile fire on the zone of displacement.

- d. With the close approach of the attacking echelon to assaulting distance from its objective, the platoon leader seeks to concentrate his guns as far forward as the situation and the terrain permit. On the capture of the objective he disposes the guns so as best to protect the assaulting troops from armored counterattack. This may call for movement of the guns into a position affording protection against flank attack.
- 35. Defense.—a. The combat mission of a platoon in the regimental defense may be the defense of a designated sector, covering an area or avenue of approach for hostile tank attack, or the protection of a designated unit or echelon.
- b. The platoon leader assigns a sector of fire, distributes his sections, assigns position areas, and directs the fire of his sections as prescribed in paragraph 34b.

SECTION VII

ANTITANK GUN COMPANY

- 36. Composition.—The 37-mm antitank gun company comprises a company headquarters and antitank gun platoons (see app. I).
- 37. EQUIPMENT AND TRANSPORTATION.—The armament, equipment, and transportation of the company are indicated in appendix I.
- 38. Company Headquarters.—The company headquarters comprises a command group and an administration and supply group. In the combat area the command group is usually located in close proximity to the regimental command group. The administration and supply group is near or in the regimental train biyouac.
- 39. Duties of Command Group.—a. Commander.—The captain commands the company and also is a member of the regimental staff in an advisory capacity. He coordinates with

the regimental communications officer in the establishment of a system to provide timely warning of the hostile tank attack. He insures that his platoon leaders thoroughly understand their missions (see par. 3).

- b. Reconnaissance officer.—Assists the company commander in conducting reconnaissance. The objectives of his reconnaissance include location of firing positions and positions in readiness, routes of approach and displacements, observation posts, tank assembly areas and avenues of approach, and potential tank obstacles. He assists when necessary in guiding platoons to areas or positions designated by the company commander.
- c. First sergeant.—Under the company commander's supervision he directs the movements and dispositions of the command group and establishes and operates the company command post. He assists the company commander in maintaining contact with the regimental command post, the antitank platoons, the administration and supply group, and the company transportation.
- d. Reconnaissance and signal sergeant.—Assists the reconnaissance officer and supervises company communications (radio, wire, and visual). He assists in the establishment of the observation post and in guiding units.
 - e. Bugler .-- Acts as a guide and observer.
- f. Chauffeurs.—Operate the radio truck, the command car, and a weapons carrier.
- g. Messengers.—Act as runners, guides, and assistants at the command post. They are trained to operate the sound-powered telephone and the portable voice radio.
- h. Radio operators.—Operate the vehicular voice and CW radio and the portable voice radio. All members of the company command group are trained to operate the voice radio sets.
- i. Two motor mechanics.—Perform second echelon maintenance.
- 40. ADMINISTRATION AND SUPPLY GROUP.—The first lieutenant, second in command, directs the operations of the administrative and supply group, and the delivery of supplies, including ammunition, rations, water, and fuel. He is assisted in his duties by the mess sergeant, transportation sergeant, ammunition and supply sergeant, company clerk, armorer, two chauffeurs, cooks and cooks' helpers, and one motorcyclist.

- 41. Transportation.—a. The command group transportation comprises 1 command car, 1 radio truck, 1 truck, weapons carrier, and 4 motorcycles.
- b. The following vehicles are included in the antitank section of the service company of the infantry regiment for the transportation of the antitank company kitchen, baggage, and ammunition: 1 trailer (cargo), 1 truck (ammunition), and 1 truck (kitchen and baggage).
- 42. SIGNAL COMMUNICATION.—The communication means of the company include radio, visual signaling, sound-powered telephones, motorcycle messengers, and foot messengers. In stabilized situations and frequently in defense, wire communication is established by the regimental communications platoon between antitank units and the nearest unit having communication lines to higher and adjacent units.
- 43. Mission.—The missions of the antitank company include the protection of a rifle unit, the defense of an area, or the covering of an avenue of approach or several approaches available to hostile mechanized units.
- 44. REGIMENTAL ROUTE MARCH.—a. The distribution of the company for the protection of the column varies according to the terrain, the enemy situation, and the distribution of friendly troops. In an interior regiment the most dangerous direction of hostile armored attack during an advance is from the front, and the bulk of the company marches well forward in the column. When the troops to be protected are the leading elements it may be necessary to attach one or more antitank platoons to the leading advance guard or covering units. In an advance with an unsupported flank, a distribution of antitank elements between the leading battalion. the flank guard (where detached from the regiment), and the remainder of the regiment is usually indicated. Antitank units with the main body are carefully coordinated with advance and flank detachments with a view to providing depth to the defense.
- b. The company commander initiates early reconnaissance of areas to be occupied as bivouacs or during long halts with a view to the most effective distribution of the company for the antitank defense of the troops. Dispositions are coordinated with outposts and local security detachments. As

far as practicable troops are bivouacked in areas impracticable or difficult for tank movement or protected by a natural antitank obstacle

- c. Dispositions for antitank defense are taken, both on the march and in shelter, by all regiments in leading infantry divisions regardless of the presence of covering forces in their front.
- d. The company command group habitually marches with the regimental command group.
- 45. REGIMENTAL APPROACH MARCH.—a. On development of the regiment from route column, the command group usually functions in the vicinity of the regimental command group. The development order of the regimental commander assigns protective missions to the antitank company. These may include—
- (1) Flank protection of the regiment against armored attack from specified directions or areas. The order may designate the successive areas or avenues of approach to be defended against tank approach.
- (2) Protection of the advance of a battalion or echelon of the regiment. (The regimental order may attach an antitank platoon to a rifle battalion.)
- b. The company commander distributes the platoons for the execution of assigned missions. He reinforces them where necessary with additional means in reconnaissance, communication, and rifle elements placed at his disposition by the regimental commander.
- c. Exclusive of forces required by the situation for flank protection, the distribution of the antitank company during an uncovered approach of the regiment is frequently as follows:
- (1) One platoon attached to or supporting each leading battalion.
- (2) Remainder of the company to provide protection for the second echelon of the regiment.
 - d. Missions assigned to platoons include-
- For flank defense (where necessary), covering successive areas or routes of approach against hostile armored forces.
- (2) Protection of a designated rifle battalion or echelon. (The initial position of the platoon and the method of movement are prescribed by the company commander.)

- e. The company commander maintains contact with his platoons by voice radio and motor vehicle. The reconnaissance officer with one or more messengers accompanies the regimental reconnaissance detachments. He reconnoiters the terrain especially to locate antitank obstacles; routes favorable to hostile tank approach, stream crossings, obstacles to motor movement, and necessary detours. He reconnoiters the approach objectives designated by the regimental commander with a view to the possible antitank defense of the regimental assembly areas and the location of positions in support of the regimental attack. He promptly transmits important items of information to the company commander by messenger.
- 46. REGIMENTAL ASSEMBLY FOR ACTION.—a. Dispositions of the antitank company for the protection of a regimental assembly for action are anticipated by early reconnaissance of assembly areas. Redistribution of antitank elements for this purpose and for the support of an attack is usually necessary.
- b. The company commander assigns position areas to the platoons and locates an observation post affording a field of view over the foreground of the area and toward the flanks. He assigns a position to the company command group vehicles as near the command post as requirements for cover and proper distribution will permit.
- 47. ATTACK.—a. The regimental attack order assigns supporting and fiank protection missions to the antitank company as required by the situation. Exceptionally, it may direct the attachment of platoons to rifle battalions. This may be the case where the attack is made on a particularly wide frontage or where visibility is restricted by terrain features.
- b. Supporting missions may require platoons to protect designated battalions. More frequently regimental orders specify the number of platoons to be assigned to provide antitank protection for the attacking echelon as a whole, and leave the assignment of platoon missions to the company commander.
- c. Where the regiment attacks with an exposed flank or where for any other reason possible armored counterattack

may be anticipated, a portion of the company is held in reserve or disposed in depth. The position and mission of the antitank elements so employed are coordinated with the regimental reserve.

- d. The mission initially assigned to a platoon protecting the attacking echelon will usually be to cover a defined sector of fire, and as the troops advance to displace forward with a view to providing continuous protection. Sectors of fire may be redefined on each displacement, or zones of action may be assigned each platoon. Where terrain conditions along the entire front are substantially the same, a platoon may be assigned to the protection of each battalion in the attacking echelon.
- e. A platoon in reserve may be assigned to an initial position area with the mission of covering a defined sector of fire or blocking a specified approach, or it may be assigned a position in readiness with the mission of blocking several approaches to hostile armored forces. The company commander restates the mission as required by the progress of the attack.
- 48. DISPLACEMENT.—a. The company commander prepares for displacement by suitable instructions pertaining to the new position areas of the platoons on initial displacement.
- b. The reconnaissance officer, accompanied by the reconnaissance and signal sergeant and one or more messengers, closely follows the attacking echelon. He reconnoiters the position areas indicated by the company commander and the foreground with special reference to tank obstacles and approaches. Where practicable he recommends platoon position areas and sectors of fire to the company commander. In making these recommendations, consideration is given to the existing or planned dispositions of battalion antitank weapons so as to insure coordination of effort.
- c. The company commander may regulate the displacement of platoons by the assignment of zones of advance to the platoons or by the indication of platoon position areas based on the reconnaissance of the company reconnaissance officer. He may delegate the initiation of the displacement in accordance with general instructions to platoon leaders or reserve execution of the movement on his own order. The displacement of supporting platoons must be initiated as soon

as the attacking rifle echelon clears terrain masking the fire of the antitank guns. Where the attacking echelon occupies a position on or near a crest, the guns may move into the lines of the leading rifle units or occupy cover in readiness for such movement.

- 49. PURSUIT.—Platoons are usually attached to rifle battalions with a view to defending the pursuit force against hostile armored forces which may attempt to block or retard the pursuit. Full advantage should be taken of opportunities to engage retreating enemy armored vehicles or motorized units in march column or when traversing defiles.
- 50. REGIMENTAL DEFENSE.—a. The principal mission of the antitank company is the immediate protection of the regimental area. The guns are disposed to cover avenues of tank approach leading into the defensive area of the regiment.
- b. The method of defense of the main line of resistance is greatly influenced by the time available for the preparation of the position. In the hasty organization of a defense, it is advantageous for some antitank guns to occupy a crest position within close range of the main line of resistance that affords cover for the guns and that facilitates covered movement to alternate positions. Whenever possible gun positions are selected in terrain which is unfavorable for tank operation but from which antitank guns may deliver effective flanking fire against favorable avenues of approach. Guns are located in depth and in concealed firing positions along the flanks and irregularly across the approaches so that hostile tanks are compelled to advance against a continuous volume of effective frontal, oblique, and enfilade fire. figuration of the ground, available means, and the enemy situation will influence the depth of antitank dispositions. Antitank means must be flexibly disposed to permit timely employment either to the front or to a flank. Antitank units of reserve regiments should be assigned definite missions which may include the reinforcement of the front line regiments and the protection of avenues of tank approach leading into the regimental area from the flanks or rear.
- c. Outpost guns occupy crest positions covering avenues or areas feasible for tank employment with a view to disrupting, canalizing, and retarding the hostile tanks in their advance to the main position.

- d. A platoon protecting the regimental reserve conforms to the plan for the employment of the reserve. Its positions and plan of action are coordinated with natural and artificial obstacles so as to protect the departure positions of the reserve in counterattack against hostile foot troops following attacking tanks. It locates and prepares positions in support of the plan for the tentative flank lines of resistance to be occupied by the regimental reserve in case the enemy penetrates an adjacent sector. A platoon in support of the regimental reserve usually occupies a position in readiness and establishes observation posts to cover the approaches to the several alternate firing positions selected.
- 51. WITHDRAWAL.—Antitank units are usually attached to the covering force. Where necessary an element is held under regimental control for flank protection and detached missions. Positions are occupied with a view to facilitating the withdrawal of the regiment by defending against hostile armored elements of the pursuing forces.

SECTION VIII

AMMUNITION

- 52. General.—Eighty rounds of ammunition are considered sufficient for one battle mission and are therefore carried on the squad prime mover. Two missions (160 rounds) are transported in the section leader's truck. When the squad goes into action as part of the section, the ammunition transported on the section leader's truck is carried to the gun position for initial use. The ammunition transported on the prime mover and in other company transport is available as reserve.
- 53. Replenishment.—The platoon leader is responsible that the ammunition supply is promptly replenished and that sufficient ammunition is available at the gun positions to insure the successful completion of prospective fire missions. The squad leader reports ammunition requirements to the section leader, who transmits the information promptly to the platoon leader. When the squad requires immediate replenishment, the squad and section leaders obtain ammunition from the section vehicle.

■ 54. DISTRIBUTION.—a. Gun section.—The ammunition (90 percent armor piercing, 10 percent high explosive) carried by each gun section is distributed as follows:

Rou	nds
Section leader's truck	160
Squad prime mover	80
Squad prime mover	80
.	
	320

b. Regimental antitank company.—The ammunition (90 percent armor piercing, 10 percent high explosive) carried within the regimental antitank company is distributed as follows:

Rot	ınds
1st platoon	640
2d platoon	640
3d platoon	640
Antitank section, service company (one truck	
ammunition)	480

Total available in company______2, 400

c. Reserve.—One hundred rounds of ammunition per antitank gun are carried in the division train as additional reserve.

APPENDIX I

PERSONNEL, ARMAMENT, EQUIPMENT, AND TRANS-PORTATION, ANTITANK UNITS

- 1. Antitank Gun Squad (pars. 8-15, incl.).—a. Composition.—The squad consists of 1 corporal (squad leader) and 5 privates and privates, first class.
- b. Armament and equipment.—All members of the squad are armed with the pistol except the chauffeur who is armed with a rifle. Each gun is provided with a camouflage net and two ammunition bags. Certain important equipment is distributed as follows:
 - Squad leader.
 Field glasses.
 Watch compass.
 Wire cutters.
 Message book.
 Shoulder pad.
 - (2) Gunner (No. 1). Towing harness. Pick mattock.
 - (3) Assistant gunner (No. 2), Towing harness.Pick mattock.
 - (4) Ammunition carrier (No. 3). Towing harness. Entrenching shovel. Ammunition bag.
 - (5) Ammunition carrier (No. 4). Towing harness. Entrenching shovel. Ammunition bag.
 - (6) Chauffeur (No. 5).Flashlight.Watch compass.
- 2. RIFLE SQUAD (pars. 16-20, incl.).—a. Composition.—The rifle squad consists of a leader (sergeant), a second in command (corporal), and 11 privates and privates, first class.

- b. Armament and equipment.—All members of the squad are armed with the rifle, except the 2 assistant automatic riflemen who are armed with a pistol and the 2 automatic riflemen who are armed with the automatic rifle. Equipment is distributed as follows:
 - Squad leader.
 Field glasses.
 Watch compass.
 Wire cutters.
 Message book.
 - (2) Second in command.
 Watch compass.
 Hand ax.
 Message book.
 - (3) Three privates.
 Pick mattock.
 - (4) Eight privates. Shovels.
- 3. Antitank Gun Section (pars. 21-29, incl.).—a. Composition.—The section consists of 1 sergeant (section leader), 1 private (chauffeur), and two antitank gun squads.
- b. Armament and equipment.—The section leader is armed with a pistol and the chauffeur with a rifle. Certain important equipment is distributed in the section headquarters as follows:
 - Section leader.
 Flashlight.
 Field glasses.
 Message book.
 - (2) Chauffeur. Watch compass. Flashlight.
- 4. ANTITANK GUN PLATOON (pars. 30-35, incl.).—a. Composition.—The platoon consists of platoon headquarters (1 lieutenant, platoon leader; 1 platoon sergeant; 1 corporal, agent; 1 corporal, instrument; 1 corporal, transport; 2 privates, messengers; and 1 private, chauffeur), 2 antitank gun sections, and 1 rifle squad.
- b. Armament and equipment.—The platoon leader, platoon sergeant, agent corporal, and instrument corporal are armed

with the pistol. The transport corporal, the 2 messengers, and the chauffeur are armed with a rifle. In addition to equipment carried by individuals, the command group is equipped with drawing board, lensatic compass, and 2 protractors.

- 5. Antitank Gun Company (pars. 36–51, incl.).—a. Composition.—The company consists of company headquarters (1 captain, company commander; 1 first lieutenant, second in command; 1 second lieutenant, reconnaissance officer; 1 first sergeant; 1 staff sergeant, transport; 3 sergeants, mess, reconnaissance, supply; 1 corporal, clerk; 29 privates and privates, first class, 1 armorer, 1 bugler, 5 chauffeurs, 4 cooks, 3 cook's helpers, 2 motor mechanics, 3 messengers, 4 motorcyclists, 2 radio operators, and 4 basics), and three antitank gun platoons.
- b. Armament and equipment.—(1) The captain, second in command, reconnaissance officer, first sergeant, reconnaissance sergeant, bugler, and the radio operators are armed with a pistol, the remainder of company headquarters with the rifle.
- (2) Company headquarters equipment is distributed as follows: all noncommissioned officers and bugler are equipped with field glasses. Entrenching tools are interchanged among members of the command group to provide tools for the preparation of observation posts and other locations requiring excavations. (Ratio to every 10 men, 5 shovels, 3 pick mattocks, 1 ax, and 1 wire cutter.) One SCR-245 radio set and five SCR-195 radio sets are included in the communications equipment.
- 6. Transportation.—a. The organic motor transportation of the antitank company includes the following:
 - Company headquarters:
 - 4 motorcycles.
 - 1 command and reconnaissance car, 1/2-ton.
 - 1 radio truck. ½-ton.
 - 3 weapon carriers, 1/2-ton.

Total, company headquarters, 9 vehicles.

- (2) Each gun platoon:
 - 1 command and reconnaissance car, 1/2-ton.
 - 6 trucks. 1/2-ton, weapon carrier.

1 truck, 11/2-ton, cargo.

Total, three gun platoons, 24 vehicles.

Total in company, 33 vehicles.

- b. The following antitank transportation for kitchen and baggage is organic within the service company of the regiment:
 - 1 trailer, 1-ton, cargo.
 - 2 trucks, 11/2-ton, cargo.

APPENDIX II

LIST OF REFERENCES

- FM 5-15, EFM, Field Fortifications.
- FM 5-20, EFM, Camouflage.
- FM 5-25, EFM, Explosives and Demolitions.
- FM 5-30, EFM, Engineer Antimechanized Measures.
- FM 7-5, IFM, Organization and Tactics of Infantry, The Rifle Battalion.
- FM 7-25, IFM, Headquarters Company, Rifle Regiment.
- FM 7-30, IFM, Service Company, Rifle Regiment.
- FM 7-40, IFM, Rifle Regiment.
- FM 7-55, IFM, Reference Data.
- FM 21-30, BFM, Conventional Signs, Military Symbols, and Abbreviations.
- FM 23-5, BFM, U. S. Rifle, Cal. .30, M1.
- FM 23-15, BFM, Browning Automatic Rifle, Cal. .30, M1918A2, with Bipod.
- FM 23-35, BFM, Automatic Pistol, Cal. .45, M1911 and M1911A1.
- FM 23-60, BFM, Browning Machine Gun, Cal. .50, HB, M2, with Ground Tripod.
- FM 23-70, BFM, 37-mm Antitank Gun, M3.
- FM 24-5, BFM, Signal Communication.
- FM 25-10, BFM, Motor Transport.
- FM 100-5, FSR, Operations.